UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1825/Rev.1*
6 February 1995

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General recommends UNMOT presence be extended to 6 March on understanding efforts are made to agree on holding next round of talks; says situation in Tajikistan remains tense.

+ Efforts to halt nuclear proliferation gain greater significance with increasing number of regional and subregional conflicts, Secretary-General tells the Conference on Disarmament.

+ Secretary-General appoints new Executive Secretaries of ESCWA; ESCAP and ECA; aims to enhance effectiveness and reinforce management in United Nations economic and social sectors.

+ Committee on Elimination of Discrimination Against Women approves working group recommendations; proposals deal with draft optional protocol on right to petition Committee directly; to meet in Geneva.

+ Department of Humanitarian Affairs launches $65 million consolidated inter-agency appeal to fund emergency humanitarian activities in Liberia during first six months of 1995.

+ Commission on Human Rights discusses right to self-determination, Israeli practices in Occupied Territories; Philippine Foreign Secretary draws attention to plight of victims of child prostitution.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that the presence of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) be extended until 6 March. In a report to the Security Council dated 4 February, the Secretary-General made that recommendation on the understanding that every effort was made, during the next month, to obtain agreement on the holding of the next round of talks as soon as possible. He said the activities of UNMOT connected to the Tehran Agreement were an important stabilizing factor in the country. Although the fourth round of Tajik talks remained blocked, both the Government and the opposition were still determined to continue the political process under United Nations auspices.

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* Reissued for technical reasons.

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The Secretary-General said he had been able to comply only partially with the requirements of resolution 968 (1994). Both sides had agreed to extend the cease-fire beyond 6 February, although the opposition had only agreed to a one month extension. They had also stated their commitment to a continuing political process. However, the oppositions's unwillingness to accept Moscow as a venue for the next round of inter-Tajik talks made it impossible for him to report that the negotiations were being actively pursued at present. He would continue his efforts to obtain the agreement of both parties to a venue and date for the fourth round of talks.

In the meantime, Mr. Boutros-Ghali said, the situation in Tajikistan remained tense, particularly on the border with Afghanistan. The economic crisis had a serious negative impact on efforts to stabilize the political situation and to complete the repatriation of refugees.

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Efforts to stop the flow of arms and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction have acquired even greater significance due to the increasing number of regional and subregional conflicts, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In a message to the Conference on Disarmament meeting in Geneva last week, the Secretary-General said international cooperation in the field of disarmament had been enhanced over the last two years. He noted support at the Conference for the idea of an international convention to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and appealed to States to resolve outstanding issues. Any solution should take into account the legitimate demands of non-nuclear-weapon States for stronger international and legally binding security assurances as well as the requirement that they pledge to renounce the possession and acquisition of nuclear weapons.

The Secretary-General said that while the emphasis on arms reduction and disarmament in the nuclear field was legitimate, the negative impact of uncontrolled conventional arms transfers on international security should be vigorously addressed. Ongoing conflicts were being fought with conventional weapons, exacting a heavy toll and causing untold human suffering. Therefore, openness and transparency in military matters was essential to enhance confidence and trust among States, to help dissipate suspicions, and to contribute to global and regional stability. He described the Register on Conventional Arms is an important element in the collective effort to promote transparency.

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The Secretary-General has appointed Executive Secretaries of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). A United Nations spokesman said today the Secretary-General views the appointments as part of a broader effort to enhance the effectiveness and reinforce management in the economic and social sectors of the Organization. Revitalizing the regional commissions to increase their

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responsiveness to national priorities, and adapting their role and contribution to changing global and regional realities was a key element in that effort.

The Secretary-General has asked the new Commissioners to review programmes and management structures in order to eliminate duplication and reinforce collaboration with the specialized agencies and other programmes. His objective is to refocus and streamline the Commissions' work so that they will become catalysts for excellence and enhance regional cooperation and integration, the spokesman said. The Secretary-General also wants to strengthen links between the Commissions and the economic Departments and Programmes at United Nations Headquarters and to exploit regional approaches and solutions to development problems.

The new Executive Secretaries are: Dr. Hazem Abdel Aziz El-Beblawi (Egypt) who took up his appointment as Executive Secretary of ESCWA on 1 February; Dr. Adrianus Mooy (Indonesia) who will head ESCAP starting 1 April; and Mr. K. Y. Amoako (Ghana) who will take up his duties at ECA on 1 May.

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The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women has decided to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women, a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The Committee took that action as it adopted its final report and ended the work of its current session in Geneva on Friday. The draft would provide for individuals and groups to petition the Committee directly about violations of women's rights, or individuals or groups who had been affected by the failure of a State Party to comply with its obligations under the Convention.

The 33-member expert Committee also decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it meet in Geneva, where it could be serviced by the Secretariat of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights. It emphasized that, as women's rights had been identified by the World Conference on Human Rights as an essential component of those rights, it was appropriate for the Committee to work alongside other human rights treaty bodies located in Geneva. The Committee said it would maintain a close liaison with both the Commission on the Status of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women.

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The United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) has launched a consolidated inter-agency appeal for $65.3 million to fund emergency humanitarian activities in Liberia during the first six months of 1995. Increased fighting in the last year has been disastrous for the country's civilian population. Up to 1.8 million people inside Liberia require emergency assistance, but only 1.5 million of those can be reached. According to the DHA, without immediate improvement in overall security, the nutritional status of displaced persons, both within and outside secure zones, might deteriorate further.

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Humanitarian assistance in Liberia is hindered by some of the most difficult circumstances in the conflict's five-year history. An elusive peace and the lack of credible security guarantees by the warring factions have limited most regular relief activities to areas controlled by the Military Observer Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG). The appeal reflects humanitarian relief which can be implemented under existing security constraints.

Agencies taking part in the appeal include: the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT) in conjunction with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

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The plight of victims of child prostitution from third-world countries was stressed by Roberto Romulo, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, who addressed the Commission on Human Rights as a guest speaker. "Sex criminals, among them, many pedophiles, come to our shores like vultures in the guise of tourists and sometimes also, unfortunately, in the guise of well-meaning non-governmental organizations to prey on our children", Mr Romulo said. Contracts of sex tourism organizers should be nullified; sex tourists should be dealt with through immigration authorities; and periodic checks should be carried out in tourist resorts, he added.

The Commission, meeting in Geneva, continued its debate on human rights violations in the occupied Arab territories and on the right of peoples to self-determination, hearing statements by the representatives of 10 other countries and four non-governmental organizations. Among the topics discussed were the situation in Chechnya, Jammu and Kashmir, East Timor, Tibet, and Burundi, as well as the negative impact of the policies of international financial institutions on living standards in Central America.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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DH/1826
7 February 1995

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Seven members of Security Council to leave for mission to Burundi and Rwanda tomorrow; to consult with political leaders and other parties on political and security developments as well as return of refugees and reconstruction.

+ Security Council calls upon Croatian Government and local Serbs to negotiate, without preconditions, for a negotiated settlement; says UNPROFOR's presence in Croatia vital for regional peace and security.

+ Security Council extends presence of UNMOT until 6 March; says continued observance of cease-fire Agreement vital; urges Tajik parties to reaffirm their commitment to resolving conflict politically.

+ Secretary-General reports cost of expanding UNAVEM II at $383 million for twelve months; will recommend costs be considered an expense of Organization under Article 17 of Charter and assessments on Member States to be credited to UNAVEM's Special Account.

+ Security Council Committee acts to expedite consideration of applications concerning humanitarian supplies to former Yugoslavia.

+ Speaking at dedication of Shimon Peres Centre for Advancement of Peace, Secretary-General says Universities can foster dialogue, cultural exchange and a truly global society.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Sustainable Development tells Energy Committee renewable sources of energy must be made available to initiate energy transformation in rural areas by year 2000.

+ Commission on Human Rights considers human rights situation in Occupied Territories and right to self-determination; Special Rapporteur says political situation not likely to re-establish human rights there.

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+ UNHCR team flies to North Caucasus to implement three-month assistance programme for 160,000 people displaced by fighting in Chechnya.

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The Security Council has decided to send a mission to Burundi and Rwanda. In a note dated 6 February, Council President Legwaila Joseph Legwaila (Botswana) said the mission, which will leave from New York Wednesday, will be made up of Council members from China, the Czech Republic, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Nigeria and the United States.

While in Burundi, members of the mission will hold talks with Special Representative Ahmedou Ould Abdallah on political and security developments in the country and seek additional ways in which the United Nations can underpin his efforts. They will also meet with the President, leaders of the Security forces and the opposition, as well as United Nations agencies, members of the diplomatic corps, non-governmental organizations, and representatives of the Organization of African Unity. The mission will convey the Council's serious concerns over recent political developments in Burundi. It is also expected to stress the strong support of the Council for the Convention of Government of 10 September 1994; for the process of national reconciliation and the Council's strong rejection of all attempts to destabilize the region.

The mission will hold consultations in Rwanda with the Government regarding national reconciliation and reconstruction and the return of refugees. It will also meet with Special Representatative Shahryar M. Khan, United Nations agencies, United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) personnel and members of the diplomatic corps and non-governmental organizations in Kigali.

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The Security Council today called upon the Government of Croatia and the local Serb authorities in the United Nations Protected Areas in Croatia to urgently begin negotiating, without preconditions, towards a negotiated settlement. The Council said such a settlement should ensure full respect for the country's sovereignity and territorial intergrity and guarantee the rights of all communities, irrespective of whether they constituted a majority or a minority in a particular area.

In a statement by its President, Legwaila Joseph Legwaila (Botswana), the Council also reaffirmed its view that the presence of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Croatia was vitally important for regional peace and security. The Council expressed its desire that discussions over the weeks ahead would lead the Croatian Government to re-examine its position taken on 12 January in relation to the UNPROFOR's continuing role in Croatia.

The Council also reaffirmed its commitment to the search for an overall negotiated settlement of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia which ensured the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States there, within their internationally recognized borders. It stressed the importance it attached to

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the mutual recognition of that sovereignity and those borders. The Council strongly supported the recent efforts of representatives of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, the European Union, the Russian Federation and the United States aimed at achieving a political settlement in Croatia.

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The Security Council has extended the presence of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) for another month, until 6 March. In a letter dated 6 February, Council President Legwaila Joseph Legwaila (Botswana) said the Council endorsed the recommendation by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali contained in his report.

Reaffirming its resolution 968 (1994), the Council said continuation and effective observance of the cease-fire Agreement of 17 September 1994 was vital. It urged the parties in Tajikistan to reconfirm through concrete steps, their commitment to resolve the conflict only through political means, and their commitment to national reconciliation and the promotion of democracy.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali reports that the cost of expanding the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM II) has been estimated at $383.1 million for the initial 12-month period from 9 February. In an addendum to his earlier report of 1 February, the Secretary-General said the estimate provides for 6,771 military contingent personnel, 350 military observers, 260 civilian police monitors, 336 international civilian staff, 343 locally recruited staff and 68 United Nations volunteers.

The Secretary-General said if the Security Council decided to authorize the expansion of the Mission, he would recommend to the General Assembly that the costs be considered an expense of the Organization to be borne by Member States in accordance with Article 17, paragraph 2 of the United Nations Charter. Assessments to be levied on Member States would be credited to the Special Account for UNAVEM.

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The Security Council Committee has decided to put immediately in place, as a first step, a number of measures aiming at expediting the consideration of applications concerning humanitarian assistance to the former Yugoslavia. The decision was made following a request made by the Council in its resolution 970 (1995) related to the streamlining of its rules and procedures.

In a statement on 6 February, by its Chairman Emilio J. Cardenas (Argentina), the Committee said it had decided that applications from the international humanitarian agencies would be processed by the secretariat on a top priority basis. Those agencies include the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICF); the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The Committee further decided to

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extend the same approach to applications from States, submitted on behalf of non-governmental humanitarian organizations, or concerning the personal belongings of individuals.

It was also decided that requests from the international humanitarian agencies for the transshipment of humanitarian items through the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) by land should be considered under its expedited no-objection procedure, rather than at a formal meeting of the Committee. The Committee remains seized of the matter and intends to keep States, humanitarian agencies and organizations informed of its further decisions.

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The true worth of Universities was to foster dialogue, cultural exchange and a truly global society, and to transmit to young generations tolerance, mutual respect, and a dedication to truth, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said Monday. The Secretary-General was addressing the dedication dinner in New York, of the University of Haifa Shimon Peres Centre for the Advancement of Peace, where he received the Doctorate honoris causa.

In the midst of difficult times, Universities remained places of refuge and dialogue, the Secretary-General continued. In medieval Universities, philosophers and scientists, Moslem, Christian and Jewish, could engage in open debate without fear of the turmoils in the outside world. Today, when the challenges to peace in the Middle East loomed large, the University of Haifa was a space where Moslems, Christians and Jews could feel at home. It embodied a tradition of mutual respect and a search for common ground.

The Secretary-General said that what the University of Haifa had tried to do within the walls of academia, visionary men and women had tried to apply in the more prosaic world of politics. Shimon Peres was a man of peace and it was appropriate his lifetime commitment to peace and scholarship should be celebrated by naming the Centre for the Advancement of Peace after him.

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Alternative and renewable sources of energy had to made available in order to initiate an energy transformation in rural areas by the year 2000, the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development was told yesterday. Nithin Desai, Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, told the Committee that the world could not be described as sustainable if the energy base of the rural economies of developing countries remained dependent on biomass and the use of traditional technologies. The Committee was beginning its two-week special sesssion in New York.

Mr. Desai said that in many ways the Committee's work brought together the scarcity, development and environment dimensions of a problem affecting up to 3 billion people. Its views would play an important part in the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Committee has been asked by

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the Economic and Social Council to advise the Commission on questions relating to energy for rural development and make recommendations on developing countries' energy resources.

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A United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) operations team flew from Geneva to the North Caucasus yesterday to implement a three-month assistance programme for some 160,000 people displaced by fighting in Chechnya. The 14-member team, from UNHCR's Emergency Preparedness and Response Section, includes specialists in logistics, transport, storage, field work, protection, communications, social services and administration.

UNHCR staff first arrived in the region on 11 January at the request of the Russian Federation and Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to assess the needs of tens of thousands of civilians fleeing the fighting in Chechnya. The North Caucasus operation is part of a $23.6 million, three-month inter-agency programme announced 1 February.

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The Special Rapporteur on human rights violations in the occupied Arab territories, including Palestine, told the Commission on Human Rights he was sorry that conclusions in his report on the situation there had been taken as a general condemnation of multilateral efforts, and in particular, as an attack on the work of the Commission. René Felber said that the human rights situation in the occupied territories had not sufficiently improved, and there was a need to act very quickly. However, the political situation was not likely to achieve the Commission's objective of re-establishing human rights in the territories.

During its debate on violations of human rights in the occupied Arab territories and on the right to self-determination, the Commission, which is meeting in Geneva was also told by the observer for Israel there was a new battle in the Middle East -- a battle for peace. Things had moved between Israel and the Palestinians, despite claims to the contrary and in spite of the manifold difficulties, he said. He stressed that extremist groups, often working under the guise of religion, were trying to destroy the peace process through a planned series of horrors. The enemies of peace had no respect for human rights and posed agonizing dilemmas for Israel and for the Palestinian Authority, he added.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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8 February 1995

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council authorizes establishment of UNAVEM III, to help restore peace and national reconciliation in Angola; Mission will deploy up to 7,000 military personnel; initial mandate until 8 August.

+ Secretary-General recommends increase in authorized strength of UNAMIR's civilian police component from 90 to 120 observers; says strong foundation established for further progress in Rwanda.

+ Secretary-General appoints Mr. Berhanu Dinka (Ethiopia) as Special Envoy for Sierra Leone for an initial period of three months; to work with parties towards a negotiated settlement of three-year conflict.

+ Bosnian Serbs, Bosnian Army and Bosnian Croats take part in helicopter reconnaisance of Mount Igman DMZ; all sign moratorium that zone is free troops; humanitarian situation in Bihac causing increased concern.

+ Special Representative Lakhdar Brahimi returns to Haiti today following positive meeting with troop contributors focusing on phasing in of UNMIH.

+ Member States owe United Nations almost $3.6 billion as of 31 January; $1.4 billion owed to regular budget and $2.2 billion to peace-keeping.

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The Security Council today authorized the establishment of a new operation, the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III), to help the Angolan Government and the National Union for the Total Indepedence of Angola (UNITA) restore peace and achieve national reconciliation in their country. The Council had before it the Secretary-General's report dated of 1 February. In unanimously adopting resolution 976 (1995), the Council stated the Mission will assist in the peace process on the basis of the "Acordos de Paz" of 31 May 1994, the Lusaka Protocol and relevant Council resolutions. With an initial mandate until 8 August, it will deploy a maximum of 7,000

military personnel, in addition to 350 military observers and 260 police observers, and will also have an appropriate number of international and local staff.

The Council authorized the immediate deployment of the planning and support needed to prepare for the deployment of the peace-keeping forces, provided the Secretary-General was satisfied the cease-fire and effective monitoring mechanisms were in place, and the parties were allowing the free and safe flow of humanitarian assistance throughout the country. The Council also authorized the subsequent deployment of elements needed to set up operational quartering areas for UNITA forces.

The infantry units will be deployed when the Secretary-General informs the Council that certain conditions have been met, including the effective cessation of hostilities, the provision of relevant military data and the designation of all quartering areas. The Council asked the Secretary-General to report monthly on progress made in deploying UNAVEM III and the implementation of the Lusaka Protocol .

The Council said it will conclude UNAVEM III's mission when the Lusaka Protocol's objectives are achieved with a completion date expected by February 1997. It called on the Government and UNITA to stop acquiring arms and war material during UNAVEM III's presence and to devote their resources to humanitarian and social needs. The Council also called on the Angolan Government to conclude an agreement with the United Nations on the Status of Forces no later than 20 March.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that the authorized strength of the civilian police component of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) be raised from 90 to 120 observers. In a report to the Security Council dated 6 February, the Secretary-General said that although much remained to be done in Rwanda, a strong foundation had been established for further progress. As the country advanced on the road to recovery and reconstruction, it was essential that the Government cooperate closely with UNAMIR and ensure that its personnel, officials of the International Tribunal and human rights officers had unimpeded access to all areasof Rwanda.

Reiterating his call for the Government to ensure that Rwandese who did not participate in the genocide were given the opportunity to play a role in national reconciliation, the Secretary-General said it would be regrettable if the achievements reached so far were jeopardized because some sections of the population felt excluded. He welcomed the efforts of regional States and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to contribute to a lasting solution to the problems of Rwanda, and noted the effort of his Special Humanitarian Envoy to coordinate United Nations response to the crisis in Rwanda.

The Secretary-General said the OAU and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) would convene a subregional conference in

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Bujumbura, Burundi this month to consider assistance to refugees, displaced persons and returnees in the Great Lakes areas. He hoped it would lay the groundwork for a later, broader conference which would identify long term solutions to ensure peace, security and sustainable development in the subregion.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has appointed Mr. Berhanu Dinka (Ethiopia) as his Special Envoy for Sierra Leone for an initial period of three months. In a letter to the Security Council dated 7 February, the Secretary-General said the Sierra Leone Head of State had asked the United Nations to facilitate negotiations between his Government and forces in the country known as the Revolutionary United Front. Mr. Dinka will work with the parties concerned towards a negotiated settlement of the three-year conflict.

The Secretary-General said an exploratory mission he sent to Sierra Leone in mid December noted the serious deterioration of the situation there. About 10 percent of the population are refugees in neighbouring countries and at least 30 percent are internally displaced. Vital infrastructure has been destroyed and three quarters of the national budget is spent on defence. If the conflict continues, it will further complicate the problem of bringing peace to Liberia and could have a destablizing effect on the region.

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In the former Yugoslavia, representatives of Bosnian Serbs, the Bosnian Army and Bosnian Croats all took part in a helicopter reconnaisance of the Mount Igman DMZ yesterday, according to a United Nations spokesman. The helicopter flight was organized by the United Nations Protection Forces (UNPROFOR) to establish whether or not the Bosnian Army had left the demilitarized zone. After the flight, all sides signed a moratorium that the zone was free of troops.

In other developments, traffic at the Sarajevo airport crossing continued to be very heavy the spokeman said. Yesterday, 410 vehicles and 2, 850 people crossed the routes which are open for eight hours daily. The routes are opened for 4 hours in the morning and 4 hours in the evening - 2 hours for Government crossings and 2 hours for Bosnian Serb crossings. Security along the routes is provided by UNPROFOR and although the two sides are allowed to have 3 monitors each along the routes, they have no authority to stop anyone or check any vehicle.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the military situation was stable except for the Bihac region, where shelling continued, the spokesman continued. The humanitarian situation, particularly the food supply, was causing a lot of concern. Efforts were being made to try and get United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) food convoys into Bihac and alternative routes into the area were being explored.

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Special Representative Lakhdar Brahimi returned to Haiti today following a very good meeting with troop contributors, according to a United Nations spokesman. The discussions which were also attended by the Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH), Major-General Joseph Kinzer focused on the phasing in of UNMIH.

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As of 31 January, Member States owed the United Nations almost $3.6 billion, according to the latest update on the Organization's financial situation. Of that amount, $1.4 billion was for assessments for the regular budget and $2.2 billion was for peace-keeping operations.

The United States - the biggest debtor -- owed a total of $1 billion for both peace-keeping and to the regular budget. The Russian Federation owed the United Nations a total of $649 million.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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9 February 1995

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Croatian Serb's self-declared parliament says it will freeze economic agreement between Croatian Government and Krajina Serbs unless UNPROFOR guarantees it will not withdraw from Croatia.

+ UNICEF Executive Board calls for plan of action based on the findings of management study; welcomes identification of areas where UNICEF can improve its performance.

+ Economic and Social Council approves procedures to allow European Community to participate fully in deliberations of Commission on Sustainable Development.

+ Draft protocol on greenhouse gas emissions reduction introduced at Negotiating Committee for Climate Change Convention.

+ Use of degraded land for producing livestock crops for bioenergy discussed in Committee on Renewable Sources of Energy.

+ DPI publishes An Agenda for Development and second edition of An Agenda for Peace in companion volumes; also publishes second volume in "blue books" series titled: United Nations and Cambodia - 1991-1995.

+ Cyrus Vance says international community can deal with conflicts through United Nations at fraction of cost nations spend to defend themselves; says United States has vital stake in Organization's peace-keeping efforts.

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The Parliament of the Croatian Serb's self-declared and unrecognized state has passed a resolution saying it would "freeze" the economic agreement until a decision was made not to remove United Nations Protection Forces (UNPROFOR) from Croatia, a spokesman for the Organization said today. The agreement, which was signed by the Croatian Government and the Krajina Serbs on 2 December, covers water and electricity links, as well as the opening of a crucial highway and oil pipeline. The spokesman said the recently opened

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highway was still functioning and a demining exercise on the railway line was proceeding as scheduled.

Meanwhile, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the situation in Bihac continued to be quiet in the northern part of the enclave, where there had previously been considerable fighting and shelling, the spokesman said. However, UNPROFOR reported an infantry attack had been launched in the southern part of the Bihac pocket by Bosnian Serbs and heavy fighting was continuing. UNPROFOR described the fighting as a clear violation of the cease-fire agreement. It was attempting to contact both sides with a view to interpositioning Bangladeshi troops between the confrontation line.

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The Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has called for a plan of action based on the findings of a management study of the Fund. Concluding its first regular session for 1995, the Board welcomed the study's recognition of UNICEF's achievements and strengths, and the identification of areas where its performance could be improved. The Board called upon the secretariat to ensure the active involvement of UNICEF's staff in the work of the task force which is being formed to implement the plan of action.

The Board also established an informal consultation of interested parties to facilitate its response to the the study's findings and asked the secretariat to identify priorities in three areas: actions which could be taken quickly without board involvement; those which needed further analysis and consultation; and those which required Board approval, especially for structural, financial and staffing issues.

UNICEF's mission in emergency situations was also discussed, with members calling for a balance between emergencies and longer-term actions. Acting Executive Director, Richard Jolly underscored the increasing security risks in countries facing emergencies. He said UNICEF was commited to developing a mission statement and a strategy paper on emergencies.

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The Economic and Social Council has approved ways to allow the European Community to participate fully in the deliberations of the Commission on Sustainable Development. As it continued its current organizational session Wednesday, the Council adopted procedures allowing the Community the right to make statements, respond to questions, and introduce proposals and ammendments. It will also be able to raise a point of order when consultations among its member States were still continuing. Although the European Community would not have the right to vote, it will be able to submit proposals that could be put to the vote if requested by a Commission member.

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A draft protocol on greenhouse gas emissions reductions was introduced Wednesday at the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Committee is currently meeting in its final session before the Conference of the Parties to the Convention which will held in Berlin from 28 March to 2 April.

Introducing the draft on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, the representative of Trinidad and Tobago said the general commitments in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change were inadequate to address effectively the consequences of the greenhouse effect. She said the draft required that developed country parties to the Protocol, which were included in Annex I of the Convention, reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide by the year 2005 to a level at least 20 per cent below that attained in 1990.

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Plantation production of fast-growing energy crops, which achieved sustainable high yields coupled with low environmental impact, could be a major potential energy source in the future. The expert from the Netherlands told the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and Energy for Development that such crops could be used as feedstock for producing bioenergy. The Committee was continuing its consideration Wednesday of the use of biomass for energy.

In tropical areas, more than one third of deforested or degraded land might be reforested through the use of biomass energy, he said. In developing countries, agriculture could be modernized and marginal-land use increased through the use of biomass to produce electricity. Potential feedstocks for generating biomass energy included municipal and industrial wastes in urban areas, and forest and plantation wastes in rural areas.

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The Department of Public Information (DPI) has published Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's An Agenda for Development and the second edition of An Agenda for Peace in companion volumes. The two books are being published in all six United Nations languages. Their publication is part of the effort towards stimulating innovative thought and action at the forthcoming World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen and throughout the Organization's fiftieth anniversary year.

Also just published by DPI, is the second volume in the "Blue Book" series, titled The United Nations and Cambodia, 1991-1995. It features an introduction by the Secretary-General, a detailed chronology of events and a comprehensive collection of historic United Nations documentation and other materials. For the first time, more than 100 documents relating to the peace process in Cambodia have been brought together in one volume.

The "blue books" cover major developments in international relations of the past five decades in which the United Nations has played a leading role.

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Forthcoming titles include: The United Nations and Nuclear Non-Proliferation; The United Nations and El Salvador; The United Nations and Human Rights; and The United Nations and Mozambique.

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The international community was able to deal with conflicts through the United Nations at a fraction of the cost of the vast military outlays that nations had undertaken to defend themselves in the past, Cyrus Vance told correspondents at Heardquarters today. Speaking as a representative of the United Nations Association of the United States, he said effective collective security was a bargain for citizens of all countries. After working in some intractible conflict areas on behalf of the United Nations, he said he could testify to the indispensible role the Organization played in maintaining peace and helping to forestall the escalation of conflicts.

The United States had a vital stake in the Organization's peace-keeping efforts, Mr. Vance stressed. Nothing served its national interests more than a strong United Nations peace-keeping system which was capable, reliable and effective in halting the slide toward war. He said that some provisions in legislation before the American congress could fatally handicap the Organization's peace-keeping and severely restrict United States involvement in the United Nations. It would place rigid restrictions on United States approval of United Nations peace-keeping missions and financial rules that could bankrupt such operations. If those restrictions had been put in place five years ago, the international community would have been severely hampered in its ability to fight the Persian Gulf war.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1829
10 February 1995

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council expresses concern at continuing intimidation and security problems in the Rwandese refugee camps, particularly in Zaire; welcomes agreement to deploy 1,500 Zairian security forces in camps.

+ WFP warns Rwanda regional operation faces critical shortages of food and cash; scarce reserves earmarked for world-wide emergencies being used to meet immediate needs.

+ Fighting continues around Bihac safe area following Bosnian Serb infantry attack; UNPROFOR calls fighting clear violation of cessation-of-hostilities agreement.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations Kofi Annan completes review of UNOSOM II withdrawal operations; calls on Somali leaders to make renewed effort to achieve national reconciliation.

+ Head of United Nations Special Mission in Afghanistan says transitional transfer of power mechanism will be assembled in Kabul by 20 February.

+ Georgia and Abkhazia talks conclude in Geneva with understanding on certain provisions of future agreement concerning state within boundaries of former Georgia SSR.

+ Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs says donor fatique and lack of media attention reasons for decline in response to humanitarian appeals.

+ Secretary-General expresses great sadness and profound regret at death of Senator William Fulbright; notes a life dedicated to advancement of international peace, justice, democracy and human rights.

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+ UNHCR Commissioner Sadako Ogata says question of statelessness now on Agency's agenda; welcomes concepts of "right to remain";"right to return" and "right to freedom of movement".

+ Measures to address stepped-up drug trafficking in eastern and western Europe recommended by meeting of drug law enforcement officials; ways to counter money laundering also considered.

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The Security Council today expressed concern at reports of continuing intimidation and security problems in the Rwandese refugee camps, particularly in Zaire. In a statement read out by its President, Legwaila J. Legwaila (Botswana), the Council reaffirmed its condemnation of actions by former Rwandese leaders, government forces and militias living in the camps, to prevent the repatriation of the refugees.

The Security Council welcomed the agreement between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Government of Zaire to deploy 1,500 Zairian security forces and a UNHCR liaison group to improve security in the Rwandese refugee camps in Zaire. It urged Member States to provide resources for that effort. The Council expressed its concern for the safety of the international relief workers and agreed with the Secretary-General's assessment that the situation was potentially destabilizing for the subregion as a whole.

The Council encouraged the Government of Rwanda to continue to provide a framework for action to be taken to repatriate the refugees, to promote national reconciliation, and reinvigorate the political process. It called for continued international support for the Rwandese Government in its task. It also encouraged the international Tribunal for Rwanda in its work, as well as efforts to rebuild the local judicial system.

The Secretary-General was requested to make any further recommendations necessary for ensuring security in the camps, as soon as possible, and to report on the subject in the light of the outcome of the upcoming regional conference on refugees, returnees and displaced persons that the UNHCR is organizing with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Bujumbura, Burundi, 15-17 February.

Meanwhile, High Commissioner Sadako Ogata left yesterday for the Great Lakes region in Africa, where she will be meeting officials and going to refugee camps in Zaire, Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi. The trip will focus on the conference in Bujumbura.

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The World Food Programme (WFP) has warned that the Rwanda regional operation faces critical shortages of food and cash, which is seriously affecting its efforts to assist 3 million refugees and displaced people in Zaire, United Republic of Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi. As a result, the WFP

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has been forced to use scarce reserves, which will have a major effect on its capacity to respond to emergencies elsewhere in the world this year. The WFP still needs 153,000 metric tons of food to provide adequate supplies to the refugees up until July.

Daan Everts, Deputy Executive Director in charge of WFP global operations, said resources to feed mainly women and children are drying up faster than they can be replenished with new donations. In 1994, the Rwanda operation absorbed one third of WFP's global emergency food supplies, and it was critical that attention be focused on the issue of repatriation and the rehabilitation of Rwanda, Mr. Everts said. This year, the WFP will support repatriation programmes for the 2.1 million refugees from Rwanda in surrounding countries of asylum.

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In the former Yugoslavia, fighting still raged around the Bihac safe area, following the Bosnian Serb army infantry attack yesterday in the areas of Pedro Polja and around Klokot, where the water reservoir for Bihac is situated . A United Nations spokesman said the attack appeared to have been building up for some weeks and was in clear violation of the cessation-of-hostilities agreement.

In Sarajevo yesterday, Bosnian Serb forces launched an attack on an unoccupied Bosnian army bunker in the vicinity of the Jewish cemetery, the spokesman said. The bunker sustained two hits and United Nations military observers liaising between the two sides prevented the incident from escalating. It was the biggest violation of the cessation-of-hostilities agreement in the Sarajevo area since it was signed 1 January.

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The Under-Secretary-General for United Nations Peace-Keeping Operations, Kofi Annan, said today that much of what had been achieved in Somalia was vulnerable to the threat of renewed conflict. Mr. Annan had just completed his three-day visit to Somalia, where he reviewed the coordination mechanism for the withdrawal of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II).

However, Mr. Annan stressed that Somalia was a different place than it had been three years ago. People had been able to resume their lives, and in many regions, local government had been established. Education and health facilities had steadily improved, harvests had been good and farmers had produced surplus food for their own communities.

Nevertheless, the future of the country was still in the balance, he said, and it was up to the Somali leaders to build on the real achievements of the past three years and to make a renewed effort to achieve national reconciliation for the establishment of a broad-based government.

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Talks between the Georgia and Abkhazia parties have concluded in Geneva. The chairman of the negotiations, Ambassador Edouard Brunner, said the parties reached an understanding on certain provisions of a future agreement concerning a state within the boundaries of the former Georgia SSR, including the establishment of a federal legislative organ and a supreme organ of executive power. The parties will continue to work on other provisions of the future agreement at negotiations which will be resumed at the expert level in Moscow next week. On the problem of displaced persons and refugees to Abkhazia, it was reaffirmed that their return was a humanitarian problem which must be resolved without delay.

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The head of the United Nations special mission in Afghanistan, Ambassador Mahmoud Mestiri, informed the Secretary-General today that the transitional transfer of power mechanism will be assembled in Kabul by 20 February. According to a United Nations spokesman, this was a significant development since the transfer of power would take place in a peaceful and cooperative manner. Then, an effective cease-fire would take place throughout the country.

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Donor fatique and lack of media attention had resulted in a decline in the overall response to humanitarian appeals, according to Peter Hansen, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. Mr. Hansen told correspondents at Headquarters today, that since mid-1992, when the Department started compiling complete data, the shortfalls in appeals response had increased. Of the $3.5 to $4 billion required each year, only some $2.5 billion had been mobilized. The drop in funding had come at a time when the need for humanitarian assistance was growing.

However, the response to different appeals varied, Mr. Hansen said. A past appeal for the former Yugoslavia had received almost 96 per cent of the amount requested and one for Rwanda had garnered nearly 92 per cent. Whereas, an appeal for Iraq had received only 26 percent of the amount needed, which had led to decreased humanitarian aid to that country. As a result, 400 United Nations guards placed in northern Iraq to protect humanitarian aid were cut to less than 90. An appeal for Afghanistan had received a third of the amount asked for, and one for Angola only half the funding required. Mr. Hansen called the response to a recent funding request for human rights monitors in Rwanda "particularly disappointing" with only a third of the needed amount pledged.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today expressed great sadness and profound regret at the death of Senator William Fulbright, who he described as a distinguished American, a man of law, a teacher, and a prominent legislator. In a statement, the Secretary-General said Senator Fulbright's life was dedicated to the advancement of international peace, justice, democracy and human rights. The Senator was also a strong believer in the ideals of the

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United Nations and many individuals benefited directly or indirectly from his years of public service.

The Secretary-General said he had benefited directly from Senator Fulbright's work, when in 1954-1955 he spent a year as a Fulbright Research Scholar at Columbia University, New York. He would always be grateful to Senator Fulbright for a valuable opportunity to broaden his education. Mr. Boutros-Ghali extended his heartfelt sympathy and deepest condolences to the Fulbright family on their tragic loss.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Sadako Ogata, has said her agency's field officers not only observed human rights violations, but reported them to the relevant authorities. She was addressing the Commission on Human Rights meeting in Vienna, where it is debating economic, social and cultural rights, the right to development and the international human rights treaties and bodies.

Ms. Ogata said the question of statelessness had now been placed on her Office's agenda. She welcomed the fact that the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities had embodied the concepts of the "right to remain" and the "right to return" in the "right to freedom of movement".

* * *

High-level drug law enforcement officials from Europe and North America have expressed alarm at evidence that the Latin American cocaine cartels are directly targeting central and eastern European countries for illicit drug trafficking. Representatives from 38 countries concluded the Third Meeting of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies in Vienna by recommending measures to address the region's drug control concerns.

Money laundering was another major focus of the Meeting, which noted that drug criminals with cash to launder took advantage of the lack of basic financial regulations in certain countries. It called for international legal assistance to States in the process of introducing anti-money-laundering legislation. It also recommended that in certain cirmcumstances, reversing the burden of proof regarding the lawful origin of alleged proceeds of crime be considered.

Criminal drug organizations also posed serious threats to democracy, particularly to countries in transition, participants said. In eastern Europe, corruption, the use of violence to intimidate the public and infiltration of government agencies threatened the stability of the State. The Meeting called on Governments to develop institution-building programmes and on financial institutions to incorporate crime prevention measures into development assistance programmes in eastern European countries.

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UNITED NATIONS

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ The Security Council agrees with Secretary-General that UNAMIR's civilian police component be increased from 90 to 120 observers; says more human rights officers also desirable.

+ Heavy fighting continues around Bihac; UNPROFOR concerned with deployment of 100 more Serb troops near town; urges parties to respect current cease-fire.

+ Economic and Social Council decides "development of Africa" will be theme of its 1995 high-level segment.

+ Human Rights Commission told debt burden, poverty and disease hinder right to development; Latvian Prime Minister urges Commission to express grave concern at human rights violations in Chechnya.

+ Secretary-General will report on Myanmar to Human Rights Commission following talks by Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs with government leaders in Yangon.

+ Government subsidized reliance on fossil fuels is justified when developing countries need to increase energy for survival and economic development, Committee on New and Renewable Energy Sources is told.

+ Preparatory Committee for Fiftieth Anniversary recommends five-minute time-limit for statements by participants at Special commemorative meeting of General Assembly.

+ Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for Framework Convention on Climate Change considers location of Convention's permanent secretariat; Geneva, Bonn and Toronto proposed as potential sites.

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The Security Council has agreed with Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali's recommendation that the strength of the civilian police component of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) be

increased from 90 to 120 police observers. In a letter to the Secretary-General from its President Legwaila Joseph Legwaila, the Council said it believed that an increase in the the number of human rights officers in the Human Rights Field Operation in Rwanda was also desirable. It noted that a functioning judicial system was essential in the government recovery programme to establish internal security, and also for the return of refugees. The Council said it attached great importance to the establishment of an effective mine-clearance programme based on the plan submitted by the United Nations in Kigali.

Meanwhile, members of the Security Council mission to Rwanda, were in Kigali yesterday, where they met with Special Representative Shahryar Khan and representatives of humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations. They will also hold discussions with the Rwandan President and Prime Minister. Earlier, the mission visited Bujumbura, Burundi, where a regional conference on refugees, returnees and displaced persons will be held 15- 17 February.

* * *

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, heavy fighting continued around the "safe area" of Bihac over the weekend, especially in Bosanska Krupa, east of the Bihac pocket, according to a United Nations spokesman. Bosnian Serb tank and artillery rounds fired into the town killed one civilian. The United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was greatly concerned at the deployment of 100 additional Serb troops two kilometres from Bihac town's front lines, the spokesman said. Fighting could increase around Bihac in the next 48 hours and UNPROFOR was urging all parties to respect the current cease-fire.

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The Prime Minister of Latvia, Maris Gaillis has urged the Commission on Human Rights to express serious concern about the tragic events in Chechnya in view of the grave violation of human rights being committed there by the Russian armed forces. He strongly recommended that additional financial resources be allocated to the United Nations human rights machinery and humanitarian operations. The Commission was continuing its debate on economic, social and cultural rights, the right to development and the functioning of international human rights treaty bodies.

Earlier, the Commission was called on to speak plainly about democracy, development and human rights, by the United Kingdom's Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. He said that 1994 had witnessed good work by the treaty monitoring bodies. However, it was disappointing that a number of countries, notably Iran, Sudan and Cuba continued to refuse access to the Commission's Special Rapporteurs.

Several speakers stressed the negative impact of the debt burden, extreme poverty and natural disasters on economic and social development. They also

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spoke of the duty of all States to cooperate in eliminating obstacles to development and the need for a process of accountability in implementing the Declaration on the Right to Development.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali will submit a report shortly on Myanmar to the Human Rights Commission, following a visit there by Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Alvaro de Soto, a United Nations spokesman said today. Mr. de Soto, who has already reported to the Secretary-General held talks with Government leaders in Yangon on human rights, relations with the political opposition and the policy of reconciliation with the national races. Discussions are expected to continue when the Foreign Minister of Myanmar visits New York in the Spring.

* * *

The Economic and Social Council has decided that the development of Africa, including the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, will be the theme of its 1995 high-level segment. Continuing its organizational session on Friday, the Council also decided to consider the theme during the one-day policy dialogue, which is part of the segment. Still pending, was the question of the invitation of heads of multilateral financial and trade institutions, as well as of other United Nations agencies to take part in the dialoguee.

The Council asked the Secretary-General to submit nominations for the reconstitution of the Committee for Development Planning taking into account the need for balanced representation in the economic, social and environmental fields, and to reconvene the Committee before the end of 1995. The Secretary-General was also asked to submit a report to the Council's 1995 substantive session to enable it to review the Committee's working methods.

* * *

Government subsidized reliance on fossil fuels could sometimes be justified when developing countries needed to increase energy for survival and economic development, the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development has been told. The expert for India said developing countries would need to balance conventional and renewable sources of energy to meet lighting, cooking and employment-generating activities.

Addressing the Committee as it continued its consideration of energy for rural development and biomass for energy, he said his own country needed to double or triple its energy consumption and increase commercial use of its biomass sources. To address current and future pollution, it had launched one of the world's largest efforts to utilize biomass, solar, wind and other renewable energy sources.

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The Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary has decided to recommend that participants in the Special commemorative meeting of the General Assembly limit their statements to five minutes. However, it was unable to agree on arrangements for establishing the list or order of speakers. A number of representatives expressed concern on how speaking slots would be allocated between heads of State and heads of government. Another option was to have a mix of heads of State and government within each meeting as was done during the last Assembly's general debate.

According to the Chief of Protocol, Benita Ferrero-Waldner, 57 heads of State, 19 heads of government and seven other delegations had already accepted the invitation to address the commemorative meeting, which will be held at United Nations Headquarters from 22 to 24 October 1995. More acceptances were being received daily and from 100 to 110 heads of State from the Non-aligned movement were also expected to attend, she said.

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The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change has been given three criteria for the selection of the site for the Convention's permanent secretariat. The criteria include international access to the city and the secretariat; savings derived by its proximity to other United Nations offices or secretariats; and contributions offered by the potential host government. The first criterion favoured the location at one of the established United Nations headquarters. The third criterion tilted the choice in favour of the government making the best financial offer. Geneva, Bonn and Toronto were proposed as potential sites for the secretariat.

Some representatives expressed concern that the financial and other criteria tended to exclude offers from developing countries that had not previously hosted a United Nations body. The Executive Secretary of the Committee said the choice of site would be up to the Conference of the Parties and the Committee.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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14 February 1995

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping says United Nations has learned lesson of withdrawal, not retreat from its Somalia operation; stresses limits to international community's patience and resources.

+ UNHCR expresses grave concern for civilians in Bihac pocket; food convoys into area still blocked; Secretary-General appeals to both sides to show restraint.

+ Croatian Government expresses interest in keeping UNPROFOR headquarters in Zagreb even if its troops leave at end of March.

+ Disarmament Conference hears call to correct the imperfections and imbalance of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty and make it an instrument also favouring peaceful use of nuclear energy.

+ Economic and Social Council recommends its 1996 organizational session adopt issue of international cooperation against drugs as theme of its high-level segment next year.

+ Inter-regional meeting in Bratislava calls for efforts to sustain momentum generated by International Year of Family; affirms Year's success in raising awareness of family issues and generating action.

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One of the major lessons the United Nations had learned as a result of the Somalia operation was to withdraw -- and by that he did not mean retreat, Kofi Annan, the Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations said today. Mr. Annan was briefing correspondents at Headquarters on the final pullout of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) which will be completed by 6 March -- three weeks ahead of schedule. Mr. Annan said the decision to leave Somalia had been deliberate and painful, but given the number of crises around the world, the Security Council felt compelled to let the protagonists know there was a limit to the international community's

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patience and resources. The reponsibility for political compromise and national reconciliation finally lay with the leaders and people concerned. The world community could only facilitate, encourage and assist, not impose or coerce peace.

Mr. Annan said another lesson learned in Somalia was that the traditional peace-keeping guidelines of impartiality and neutrality were still valid, even in a police action. Once an operation was perceived as an effort to change the military balance or give an advantage to one side, peace-keepers could be attacked. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United Nations was walking the thin line of impartiality by trying to carry out its mandate and not be seen as taking sides, so preventing undue casualities and calls to "bring the boys home". Maintaining that very delicate line was a tough one for the Commanders to keep.

Although Somalia had been a difficult mission which did not attain all the Council's objectives, much had been achieved, Mr. Annan said. Lives had been saved, a famine ended and in many parts of the country people had resumed normal lives with the establishment of local government institutions and the improvement of education and health facilities. The Organization would continue its diplomatic efforts to bring the Somali factions together and the Agencies and non-governmental organizations would pursue their humanitarian programmes in parts of the country where security conditions permitted. To deal with the current volatile situation, they had already devised a flexible approach allowing them to operate from Nairobi.

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As fighting continued around the Bihac pocket in north-west Bosnia and Herzegovina, today, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) expressed grave concern for civilians there, especially those in the Bosnian Government controlled southern parts of the area. A UNHCR spokesman said certain vulnerable sections of the population would be gravely affected if the Bosnian Serb blockade of the area continued. The Agency had hoped to bring a food convoy into Bihac but had not yet received clearances from the Bosnian Serb side, despite their verbal and written assurances.

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has sent letters to Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic and Bosnian Serb leader, Dr. Radovan Karadzic expressing concern at the fighting and has urged restraint on both sides, according to a United Nations spokesman.

* * *

The Croatian Government has expressed interest in keeping the headquarters of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Zagreb if and when its troops leave at the end of March, according to a spokesman for the Organization. UNPROFOR's Force Commander, General Bertrand de Lapresele was given word of the Croatian interest today, when he met with a senior cabinet level Croatian official. General de Lapresele informed the official that the decision would be made by the Security Council and Secretary-General

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Boutros Boutros-Ghali in light of developments after 31 March and that their decision would be based on practicality, efficiency and effectiveness.

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Algeria has called for steps to correct the imperfections and imbalance of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Addressing the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, Mohamed Salah Dembri, the Algerian Minister for Foreign Affairs, called for the nuclear States to take decisive disarmament measures. He said the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the NPT should not only focus on the extension of the Treaty, but should also reflect on ways in which to make it an instrument that truly favoured nuclear energy for peaceful use.

Mr. Dembri said that threats to the stability of certain regions, the rise and exacerbation of ethnic and religious intolerance, as well as terrorism, had added to former unsettled situations created by the stockpiling of considerable amounts of arms, including weapons of mass destruction. Germany's representative warned that failure to re-establish the ad hoc committee on effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons could send a wrong signal in view of the forthcoming nuclear test-ban conference.

* * *

The Economic and Social Council has strongly recommended that its 1996 organizational session adopt the issue of international cooperation against illicit narcotics and psychotropic substances as a theme for its high-level segment next year. The draft resolution sponsored by the Philippines, on behalf of the "Group of 77" developing countries and China would have the Council decide, instead of recommend, the high-level consideration of the issue in 1996.

Speaking after the draft's adoption, the representative of Venezuela said he would have preferred more precise language stating how the Council would consider that issue. The representative of Mexico, supported by the United States, expressed concern that the Council had not been able to follow recommendations contained in two General Assembly resolutions requesting high-level consideration of the illicit drugs issue. There was inconsistency concerning Assembly recommendations, he added.

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The United Nations Inter-regional Meeting of National Coordinators and Focal Points for the International Year of the Family has called for the establishment of national mechanisms to ensure continued action on family issues. Concluding a four-day meeting in Bratislava, Slovak Republic, participants declared that the Year (1994) had a major impact in raising awareness of family issues and had generated action all around the world. They called on Governments to undertake concerted long-term efforts to sustain

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the momentum. The Meeting was convened by the secretariat for the Year in order to assess national experience with the Year's programme and consider follow-up activities.

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Participants reaffirmed that the Year had underscored the pivotal importance of families to the development process, as well as their multi-faceted roles for the well-being of individuals and families in all societies, despite diverse concepts of the nature and function of families. They called for measures to ensure the widest possible observance of the International Day of Families (15 May), the United Nations Year for Tolerance (1995) and the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. There were also calls for attention to be given to family issues in preparations for next month's World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen and the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in September.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

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15 February 1995

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Senior United Nations, United States and Haitian officials hold tri-lateral conference to review situation in Haiti; United States reports to Security Council that solid foundation exists for transfer from multinational force to UNMIH.

+ Regional Conference on refugees, returnees and displaced persons begins in Bujumbura, Burundi; intense diplomatic efforts to diffuse tense situation in the country continue.

+ Human Rights Commission told a special rapporteur on minority rights needed; Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance warns entire Mediterranean could suffer repercussions of religious extremism occurring in Algeria.

+ International Conference on "Sport Against Drugs" to be held in Rome 20-21 February; UNDCP and IOC will launch programme to reduce illicit drug use among youth, particularly in developing countries.

+ UNEP and ESCAP sponsored workshop in Thailand examines sustainable coastal tourism development in Asia; will recommend ways to improve rapidly deteriorating environment of region's coasts.

+ Outer Space subcommittee hears of systematic search for "extra-terrestrial civilizations"; also considers nuclear power sources in space and problems caused by space debris.

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Special Representative, Lakdhar Brahimi and the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH), Force Commander Major-General Joseph Kinzer attended a "tri-lateral" conference in Port au Prince today with Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and senior representatives from the United States. The meeting covered a wide range of topics, including a review of the current situation in Haiti, various aspects of the transition plan, the Haitian

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police, judicial reform and the elections. The United States delegation included Ambassador James Dobbins, the Special Co-ordinator for Haiti and the United States Ambassador to Haiti, William Lacey Swing.

Meanwhile, the United States has reported that a solid foundation was in place for the transfer of security from the mulitinational force to UNMIH. In its latest fortnightly report to the Security Council, the United States described the situation in Haiti as positive. Over the past two weeks, there had been a marked decrease in violence, and human rights monitors have reported no incidents of politically-motivated abuse for months. UNMIH is scheduled to establish its Headquarters in Port au Prince by the end of February. Advance teams will start deploying the first week of March and the contingents themselves by the end of March. The United States-led multi-national force is slowly departing and is now down to some 7,000 soldiers, a third of the original 21,000 troops deployed last September.

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A three-day regional Conference on refugees, returnees and displaced persons began in Bujumbura, Burundi today. The Conference, which is sponsored by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), might extend to a fourth day in order to allow a summit of central and east African Heads of State, according to a United Nations spokesman.

Meanwhile, the situation in Burundi remained tense because of the minority Tutsi opposition party's declaration and implementation of a general strike throughout Bujumbura. There have been intensive diplomatic efforts to contain the situation in Burundi, including recent visits by the Security Council special mission and the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Mr. Lansana Kouyate.

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The Commission on Human Rights should name a special rapporteur on minority rights who could address situations warranting immediate reaction. Such a person could also carry out "preventive diplomacy" visits to monitor the implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities. Addressing the Commission as it discussed migrant workers, minority rights and religious intolerance, the representative of Finland said that the costs of such a mechanism would be modest compared to those of inter-group conflicts and violations of minority rights.

The representative of China said that a number of State-financed projects in Tibet had greatly promoted the objective of protecting Tibetan Buddhism and the traditional culture. More than 1,600 temples were open for worship, with more than 40,000 monks and nuns. China had observed the principles of protecting religious freedom as outlined in the international human rights instruments and had adopted legislative, judicial and administrative measures for their implementation.

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Introducing his report, the Special Rapporteur on religious intolerance told the Commission the dividing lines between religious conflicts and other types of conflict, as well as between religious intolerance and political persecution, were not always clear. Progress towards religious freedom was not sufficiently strong. He said that the entire Mediterranean would suffer the repercussions of religious intolerance and extremism occurring in Algeria.

* * *

The use of sports as a means of reducing the illicit demand for drugs, particularly among youth in developing countries, will be the focus of a two-day international conference to be held in Rome on 20 and 21 February. The Conference on Sport Against Drugs will bring together some 200 participants, including representatives of National Olympic Committees, athletes, journalists, governments, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations. It has been organized jointly by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and the European Olympic Committees on behalf of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

During the Conference, the UNDCP and the IOC will co-sponsor a series of projects aimed at using sports to promote a healthy, drug-free lifestyle among youth, particularly in developing countries. Participants are expected to share their experience in combating drug abuse by promoting the athletic values of self-discipline, physical training and team spirit. They will also explore the possibility of using messages from famous athletes and the holding of sports events to launch information campaigns against drugs.

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The rapidly deteriorating environment on Asia's coasts and its improvement is the focus of a regional and national workshop taking place in Thailand this week. The workshop is organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). It will address sustainable coastal tourism development, with emphasis on regional needs and also focus on tourism development in various parts of Thailand.

According to the Director of the Paris-based Industry and Environment Centre of UNEP, Jacqueline Aloisi de Larderel, East Asia and the Pacific will become the fastest growing tourism region in the world and sustainable coastal tourism was a crucial issue. The regional workshop aims to foster exchanges between participants on conditions for sustainable coastal tourism development. It will also prepare recommendations to help them define and implement their own policies in their respective countries, according to Suvit Yodmani, Director and Regional Representative of the UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

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The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has been told of efforts by American and

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Australian scientists to systematically search for extra-terrestrial civilizations on distant planets. The Australian representative described how researchers were using the Parkes radio telescope in his country to examine some 1,000 stars similar to the sun. They hoped to find planetary systems that might support advanced civilizations or detect radio frequencies that could be made by technology similar to our own.

Current standards for the use of nuclear power sources in outer space should be revised to adhere to current principles on radiation protection and nuclear safety in earth-based contexts, a representative of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) told the Subcommittee. She said many of the standards and guidelines issued by the IAEA might be applicable to the safety of nuclear power sources in outer space.

On the problem of space debris, several speakers recommended the development of a multi-year plan for dealing with the issue. The representative of Canada said the risks of impact from orbital debris could become a hindrance to continued access to space and called for prompt, concerted, multilateral efforts to study the phenomenon. The representative of the Philippines called for appropriate measures to remove all inactive satellites from orbit, including the organizing of "scavenging missions" aimed at minimizing space debris. Space law should serve and protect all humanity, including those who lacked space capabilities, he said.

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UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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Prepared by Central News

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16 February 1995

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ UNHCR and UNPROFOR humanitarian convoy finally reaches Bihac pocket; additional relief convoys on way to area.

+ Croatian Government says it will support proposal suspending most sanctions on Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) if certain conditions met.

+ Secretary-General appeals to political leaders in Burundi to continue dialogue and political compromise; international community expresses serious concern with situation in country.

+ United Nations trust fund established for legislative and parliamentary elections in Haiti; United States pledges $10 million for electoral assistance.

+ UNAMIR Radio begins broadcasting in Kigali; Special Representative says broadcasts will provide factual information of situation in country and refugee camps, as well as United Nations goals and activities.

+ Human Rights Commission hears calls for increased protection for clandestine immigrants and an end to restrictions on fundamental rights of migrant workers.

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The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) have managed to get their critical humanitarian convoy into the Bihac pocket. According to a United Nations spokesman, the 10-truck convoy came under fire as it crossed the front line into the government-controlled southern section of Bihac, but nobody was injured.

The UNHCR estimates the convoy of food and medical supplies will meet the needs of the people in the Bihac "safe area" for one day. Another three convoys will travel to the area in the next three days.

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The Croatian Government has said it is willing to support the proposal suspending most sanctions on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) if certain conditions are met. Croatia's Ambassador to the United Nations, Mario Noble, cited three conditions: there must be strict international control of the relevant international borders; the international border control must be complimented by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE); and all five states of the former Yugoslavia must be recognized as equal successors.

The proposal was made by the Contact Group (France, Germany, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and the United States). It would offer the suspension, but not the lifting, of most sanctions on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) if it recognized the independence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Slovenia and Croatia.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today appealed again to political leaders in Burundi to continue the spirit of dialogue and political compromise which presided during the signing of the Convention of Government Agreement of 10 September 1994. A United Nations spokesman said today that the international community was seriously concerned with the political situation in Burundi where tensions had increased following the recent resignation of the Prime Minister.

The Secretary-General said his Special Representative, Ould Abdullah, with whom he was in constant contact, would be at the disposal of Burundi's leaders to offer whatever assistance was necessary to help them overcome the difficulties their country was going through.

* * *

A United Nations trust fund will be set up for electoral assistance in Haiti, according to a spokesman for the Organization. Senior officials from the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) and the United States who took part yesterday in a trilateral conference with President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. They agreed on details of the technical assistance they will give during the country's legislative and parliamentary elections. The United States has pledged $10 million of which $2.3 million has already been disbursed.

During the conference, judicial reform and preparations for the transition from the multinational force to UNMIH were also discussed. It was agreed that the efficiency of the new Haitian police force would be crucial for the success of the operation. President Aristide expressed his appreciation to all the countries which had supported Haiti in its return to democracy, the spokesman said.

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The United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) began broadcasting today from Kigali. UNAMIR Radio will initially broadcast four hours daily, in Kinyarwanda, French and English. Special Representative Shaharyar Khan said since there was no television or press in Rwanda, people relied on radio for information. The objective of UNAMIR Radio was to project a factual image of what was happening in Rwanda and the refugee camps, and to inform people of the goals and activities of the Organization, thereby helping to promote national reconciliation.

In a United Nations Radio interview, Mr. Khan said that in the past six weeks, UNAMIR had closed down 40 per cent of the camps for internally displaced persons, and had assisted 150,000 out of a total of 350,000 of those people to return home. He called the achievements of the recent round-table Conference in Geneva "very, very positive" with some $640 million pledged in assistance for Rwanda.

* * *

Several speakers addressing the Commission on Human Rights have called for increased protection for clandestine immigrants and an end to restrictions on the fundamental rights of migrant workers. The Commission was continuing its debate on minority rights, migrant workers' rights and religious intolerance. It also considered obstacles to the implementation of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. Such obstacles included forced repatriation, arbitrary deportations and unjustified confiscations of entry documents.

The representative of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom said the situation of migrant women was characterized by triple discrimination. The women were foreigners, often economically underprivileged and subject to gender-specific oppression, including sexual abuse and harassment. Special efforts were needed to improve the working and living conditions of migrant sex workers, she said.

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council expresses deep concern at continued fighting around Bihac safe area and deplores serious humanitarian situation there.

+ WFP reports serious malnutrition and hunger in Bihac enclave; a second UNHCR food convoy is stopped from reaching pocket by breakaway Abdic forces; UNHCR warns of tragedy unless regular humanitarian deliveries are resumed.

+ Human Rights Commissioner José Ayala Lasso says situation in Burundi has deteriorated seriously in recent days; fears tragic explosion there unless world community helps strengthen country's democratic institutions.

+ Secretary-General greets cease-fire between Ecuador and Peru; reiterates his offer to help two countries consolidate their truce.

+ Secretary-General welcomes release of Operation Lifeline Sudan relief workers; condemns latest flagrant violation of humanitarian principles and targeting of relief personnel.

+ Cost of deploying 30 additional UNAMIR civilian police observers estimated at $590,000 for first six months by Secretary-General in report to Security Council.

+ Secretary-General recommends seat of International Tribunal for Rwanda be located in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania; says justice and fairness require trial proceedings be held in neutral territory.

+ Regional conference in Bujumbura on refugees, returnees and displaced persons builds consensus for plan of action on voluntary return of refugees, aid to asylum countries and security in refugees camps.

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For information media—not an official record

+ Chief Prosecutor for International Tribunal in former Yugoslavia outlines logistical difficulties in establishing Prosecutor's office; says Tribunal will bring charges against leaders who ordered crimes and conceived policies.

* * *

The Security Council said today it is deeply concerned at the continued fighting around the Bihac safe area and deplored the serious humanitarian situation in the area. In a statement by its President, Legwaila J Legwaila (Botswana), the Council reiterated the importance of full compliance with the agreements between the Bosnian parties on the cease-fire and on the complete cessation of hostilities in Bonsnia and Herzegovina concluded in December. All involved must make a concerted effort to consolidate what had been achieved so far to avoid the risk of a renewed outbreak of hostilities.

The Council demanded that all forces in the Bihac area cease fighting immediately and cooperate fully with the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in achieving an effective cease-fire. It also reiterated its condemnation of the continued violations of the international border between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. It condemned recent obstruction of humanitarian convoys destined for the Bihac area by the Croatian and Abdic forces. It welcomed the fact that the convoys were now getting through, and called for all parties to facilitate the unhindered flow of humanitarian assistance and UNPROFOR's complete freedom of movement.

* * *

The World Food Programme (WFP) has reported, for the first time, serious malnutrition and hunger in the war-stricken Bihac enclave. Between 10 to 20 per cent of the 200,000 people still in the pocket were at risk of imminent starvation, the agency said. The situation was particularly grave for the 40,000 in Bihac town, where at least 13,000 displaced persons are living within the small city centre in abandoned, blown-out houses.

Meanwhile, a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) food convoy trying to reach the Bihac pocket today was blocked by breakaway Bosnian forces led by Fikret Abdic, according to a United Nations spokesman. The 10-truck UNHCR convoy which reached Bihac yesterday was the second this month and represented only 5 per cent of the enclave's monthly requirement of nearly 2,000 metric tons of food. The UNHCR was extremely concerned about the humanitarian crisis in the Bihac region, where people were on the verge of disaster, said UNHCR Special Envoy Anne-Willem Bijleveld. If a tragedy was to be avoided, regular and safe humanitarian access must resume.

* * *

The human rights situation in Burundi has deteriorated seriously, particularly in the last few days, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, José Ayala Lasso. Speaking before the Human Rights Commission in Geneva today, Mr. Ayala Lasso said he had received

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alarming reports on the political crisis centred around key figures in the country. More than ever, Burundi was in danger, and he was afraid of another tragic explosion like the one in Rwanda unless immediate action was taken.

Mr. Ayala Lasso said the international community should focus on Burundi and assist the country in strengthening its democratic institutions and ensuring full respect for human rights and fundemental freedoms. It was imperative to act so as to establish a climate of tolerence and mutual respect whereby each and every citizen was not considered a Tutsi or a Hutu but a member of the Burundese nation.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today welcomed the news that a cease-fire has come into effect between Ecuador and Peru, according to a United Nations spokesman. The Secretary-General applauded the mediation efforts of the four countries -- Argentina, Brazil, Chile and the United States -- which are guarantors of the 1942 Protocol between Ecuador and Peru. He also welcomed their readiness to send military observers to facilitate implementation of the cease-fire and other measures aimed at reducing tensions and permitting a peaceful search for agreement on outstanding issues.

The Secretary-General appealed to the Ecuadorean and Peruvian Governments to continue their cooperation with the four guarantors in working out a lasting solution to the problems that have caused the dispute. He also reiterated his earlier offer of support to help the two countries consolidate the truce. The spokesman said a number of United Nations agencies were giving humanitarian assistance to people who had been affected by the hostilities.

* * *

The Secretary-General has learned with satisfaction that the 11 relief workers of Operation Lifeline Sudan, taken hostage on 8 February, have been released unharmed. The Secretary-General, none the less, condemned this latest flagrant violation of humanitarian principles and all targeting of relief workers, a United Nations spokesman said today.

The Secretary-General stressed to all concerned that Operation Lifeline Sudan was conducted strictly in accordance with the humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality and humanity. He called on all concerned to respect those principles and to ensure the security of relief personnel, as well as their unimpeded access to affected populations. The relief workers taken hostage were from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Médecins du Monde, Save the Children/United Kingdom, and Swiss Disaster Relief.

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The cost of deploying an additional 30 observers with the civlian police component of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) would amount to over $591,000 for a six month period, according to the Secretary-General. In a progress report on UNAMIR, he said the monthly cost

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thereafter would be approximately $90,000. Should the Security Council decide to approve his recommendation to increase the number of observers from 90 to 100, the costs related to the increase should be considered an expense of the Organization to be borne by Member States.

* * *

The Secretary-General has recommended that the seat of the International Tribunal for Rwanda be located in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania. In a report to the Security Council dated 13 February, the Secretary-General said while the international character of the Rwanda Tribunal was a guarantee of the just and fair conduct of the legal process, it was nevertheless necessary to ensure the appearance of complete impartiality and objectivity in the prosecution of persons responsible for crimes committed by both sides to the conflict. With the atmosphere now prevailing in Rwanda, bringing into the country to stand trial, leaders of the previous regime alleged to have commited genocide would entail serious security risks.

The Secretary-General said the choice of Kigali as the seat of the Tribunal, even if premises were available, would have entailed extensive and costly repairs to make them operational. Arusha had readily available premises, which might be offered rent-free, or at a very low rate. The city's proximity to victims, witnesses and potentially accused persons situated in Rwanda and neighbouring States, and its accessiblity by air to those locations, would considerably reduce travel costs.

* * *

The Special Representative for Rwanda, Shahryar Khan, today joined the final session of the joint regional conference on refugees, returnees and displaced persons being held in Bujumbura, Burundi. The conference, which is jointly sponsored by the UNHCR and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), has been slowly building a consensus for a plan of action on the voluntary return of refugees, aid to asylum countries and security in the refugees camps.

Meanwhile, 100 Zairian soldiers have already been working with the UNHCR on camp security, the spokesman said. Early next week, 15 international experts will arrive from the Netherlands to begin a training programme for over 1,500 soldiers from Zaire who will assist the UNHCR with security.

* * *

There were tremendous logistical difficulties associated with establishing an international prosecutors office, Judge Richard Goldstone, Chief Prosecutor for the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, told correspondents at Headquarters today. Mr. Goldstone said while he understood the frustrations and the sense of urgency felt by victims and human rights organizations, delays in setting up the Tribunal were not the result of any lack of will by the international community.

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Mr. Goldstone said efficient, experienced lawyers, investigators and analysts were needed from as many countries as possible because geopraphical representation was fundementally important. Competent people were busy and needed time to relocate. The Tribunal was also operating under financial restraints and still only had two thirds of its staff, although he expected it to be fully staffed within the next few months.

Those indicted by the Tribunal were not "little fish", Mr. Goldstone said. They were charged with genocide and crimes against humanity and had been involved with murder, rape and torture. The Tribunal was intent on bringing charges at the earliest time possible against those who had ordered the crimes and conceived the policies. Indictments were chosen not only because of the seriousness of the specific allegations but because through them, it would be possible to establish a pattern of conduct which was inconsistent with spontaneous actions by paramilitary groups or anyone else. In order to charge the leaders, it was important to establish what had happened and that had to be done through eye-witnesses.

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UNITED NATIONS

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General and UNESCO Director-General launch 1995 International Year of Tolerance.

+ Secretary-General proposes establishment of small United Nations team to take over verification responsibilities and good offices when ONUSAL's mandate ends 30 April.

+ Tensions ease in Burundi capital; regional conference on refugees, returnees and displaced persons ends with plan of action to allow refugees in Great Lakes region to return home freely.

+ Haitian Provisional Electoral Council announces first round of parliamentary and local elections to take place 4 June; second round will be held 25 June.

+ UNHCR convoys to Bihac denied passage by Croat Serbs; Special Representative and UNPROFOR Force Commander meet with Croatian Serb leaders to demand end to humanitarian aid interference.

+ Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy recommends priority consideration of action relating to energy for rural development.

+ Final session of Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Climate Change approves recommendations on financial mechanism and guidelines for activities of subsidiary bodies.

* * *

Tolerance did not mean accepting brutality disguised as nationalism or ignoring abuses against human rights if they assumed the cloak of religion, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said today at a press conference launching the 1995 International Year for Tolerance. The Secretary-General said the importance of tolerance had been made tragically clear in recent years. Many people had sought security from vast technological advances,

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For information media—not an official record

political transformation and economic uncertainty with increasingly narrow and exclusive ethnic, reglious or racial groupings. Too often, strife and suffering had followed.

The Secretary-General said that the international media could play an important role in promoting tolerance by bringing to light abuses against marginalized groups and by being wary of those who abused the power of the press to foment hatred. Member States would be able to focus on ways to advance tolerance during next month's World Summit for Social Development where "social disintegration" was one of the three major themes.

Mr. Federico Mayor, Director-General of the United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) said that fighting intolarence required both State action and individual responsibility. During the Year courageous decisions must be taken to increase peace-building and to strengthen early warning mechanisms and conflict prevention. There must be action to ensure the vitality of mixed societies, because every society in the world today was diverse in its own way, and not one was beyond the danger imposed by the infernal cycle of intolerance and violence.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended the establishment of a team of about eight professionals to take over the verification responsibilities and good offices of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL) when its mandate ends on 30 April. In a note to the Security Council dated 17 February, the Secretary-General proposed that the team, accompanied by necessary support staff, be established initially for six months. It would verify the implementation of outstanding points on the peace agreements and provide a continuing flow of accurate and reliable information so that he could keep the Council informed.

The Secretary-General said there was continuing disquiet regarding the implementation of agreements concerning land, the difficult issue of human settlements, the judiciary, electoral reform and the binding recommendations of the Commission on the Truth. The recent forcible takeover of the Legislative Assembly and the Ministery of Finance and of land by members of the Association of Demobilized Members of the Armed Forces, which was diffused by ONUSAL, was one symptom of lingering discontent at the failure to implement some parts of the peace agreements.

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Tensions have eased in Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi, especially after the Opposition party, which now had a candidate for Prime Minister, called off the general strike, according to a United Nations spokesman.

The regional conference in Bujumbura on refugees, returnees and displaced persons concluded on Friday by approving a plan of action which would allow refugees in the Great Lakes region to return freely to their homes. The Conference, which was jointly sponsored by the United Nations High

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Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), called on Rwanda, Burundi and the asylum countries to take measures to ease tensions and create conditions for the safe return of the refugees.

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In Haiti, the Provisional Electoral Council has announced that the first round of parliamentary and local elections will take place on 4 June and the second round on 25 June, according to a United Nations spokesman. All 83 seats in the Chamber of Deputies, two thirds of the 27 seats in the Senate, and 2,200 State and local elected posts will be contested. The United Nations, which has set up an electoral trust fund for the Haitian electoral process, will observe the campaign and extend technical assistance. The Organization of American States (OAS) will monitor the elections themselves.

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A United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) convoy, which tried to reach the central Bihac pocket today through Croatian Serb controlled territory, was denied passage despite having received prior approval, according to a United Nations spokesman. The convoy was diverted to Velika Kladusa where it was waiting for "tedious negotiations" to allow it to pass through territory controlled by the Abdic forces. In the past, the Abdic forces had demanded an excessive share of the humanitarian aid.

A second convoy, which set out along the same route, was also denied passage by the Croatian Serbs and was expected to arrive in Velika Kladusa tomorrow. Only 223 metric tons of food out of a monthly target of nearly 2,000 metric tons had been delivered to the Bihac pocket in February. Last month, only 305 metric tons of aid reached the area. Elsewhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the UNHCR was enjoying freedom of movement and humanitarian aid deliveries were proceeding normally.

Meanwhile, Special Representative Yasushi Akashi and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) Commander, General Bertrand de Lapresele, were in Knin, where they met with top Croatian Serb military and political leaders. Mr. Akashi demanded that the Croatian Serbs end their interference with humanitarian aid deliveries into the Bihac pocket. The increasingly urgent effort to end the 4 year-old Croatian war and matters relating to the economic agreement of 2 December were also discussed.

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The Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development has recommended that States, United Nations bodies and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations be asked to give priority consideration to a wide range of actions relating to energy for rural development. The recommendations were made at the end of the Committee's two-week special session in its report to the Commission on Sustainable Development.

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The Committee recommended that States which had not already done so be invited to formulate and begin implementing national plans of action on energy for sustainable agriculture and rural development not later than the year 2000. Such national action plans should give special attention to the sustainable development and efficient use of biomass as a source of energy.

Another recommendation was that priority consideration be given to the launching of a global initiative, before the year 2000, to facilitate the efforts of developing countries to bring electric power to rural and isolated areas. The initiative would be launched by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the Global Environmental Facility, and would be based on successes already achieved in such renewable energy technologies as photovoltaic, wind and mini-hydro energy.

* * *

The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change has approved proposals on the financial mechanism for the Convention and guidelines for the activities of its subsidiary bodies in its final session. The proposals will be submitted to the first Conference of the Parties to the Convention, scheduled for Berlin in March.

The Committee, which met from 6 to 17 February, deferred approval of the draft rules of procedure for the Conference and adopted its report. Other recommendations approved dealt with temporary arrangements between the Committee and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and guidelines for methodologies which parties could follow in creating inventories on national greenhouse gases and assessing climate change impacts.

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